GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

GCSE (LEGACY) SOCIOLOGY

SUMMER 2018
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Annual Statistical Report

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

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The standard on these papers has continued to improve during the life of this specification. The entry attracts a wide range of ability, including candidates whose work would not be out of place on an A’ Level paper. The less able candidates are still able to access the paper in a meaningful way and only a very small minority are unable to attempt parts of the paper. The essays provide opportunity for high quality extended writing and the use of sociological concepts, theories and studies.

SECTION A

Q1. Most candidates were able to gain all 6 marks for this question. A minority of candidates confused values and roles.

Q2. (a) Candidates either had a strong basic idea of what anthropology was or did not. A lot of answers said that it was the study of other cultures but failed to elaborate. Those who did not know tended to copy from the source material, failing to gain marks.

(b) Most candidates gained both marks easily. Some struggled to name a second rite of passage. Birthday was a common choice which was not accepted as a valid mark. Marriage and funerals were the most common after Prom.

(c) This answer was tackled reasonably successfully although a lot of candidates appeared to be describing and giving examples of cultural relativism. This gained some credit but was not really what the answer was looking for. There was a lack of good examples of cultural diversity.

Q3. (a) This was generally answered well, although some answers needed more development.

(b) Candidates needed to develop their answer further for each reason. The better answers referred to the need to follow social norms to enable them to fit into society. Most candidates however picked up some marks for this and grasped the main idea about the importance of social rules.

(c) This answer was poorly developed by many candidates. Many wrote about informal social control or the agencies involved in this, such as the family or school. Stronger answers mentioned the agencies of social control and the power of the police and courts.

(d) Candidates were mostly successful at this. Some candidates used vague terms, such as survey and lost a mark.
(d) (ii) Candidates did well at this and most were able to link their method to valid reasons for the choice.

(e) There were some good answers which clearly grasped the ethical issues involved. A minority did not relate to an ethical issue but wrote about problems of people not telling the truth.

Q4. (a) There were no problems with this question.

Q5. (b) There were two marks available for this. Many candidates failed to develop their answer and merely copied a line from the source.

(c) The answer was not a problem for most candidates and they were able to secure both marks.

(d) Stronger answers used terminology, such as imitation or copying and gave practical examples or referred to gender roles. Weaker answers used commonsense terms, such as teaching them or showing them.

(e) This was generally answered well.

(f) (i)(ii) Most candidates were able to secure marks here. Stronger answers linked to the question itself and reasons why answers from parents may lack validity.

Q6. (a) Norm was not a concern for most candidates with only one mark available. Most secured this, but some did not achieve a mark as they just said it was ‘normal behaviour’. Had they added the word expected this would have gained the mark.

(b) Many candidates still confused gender with the term sex which relates to biological characteristics. Some credit was given for those who wrote about it as the way that you identify yourself with a sex. Much stronger answers referred to a set of norms related to masculinity or femininity or that gender is socially constructed.

(c) Almost all gave relevant examples of stereotypes but found it harder to develop their definitions.

(d) This question posed few problems but stronger answers referred to terminology such as gender presentation or stereotypes.

(e) Stronger answers referred to the need for greater social representation or the need to show cultural diversity and make people more open-minded. This was encouraging and even less eloquent answers understood the reasons for this.

SECTION B

Q7 (a) Stronger answers referred to the similarity in status and/or age. Some gave examples of school friends. Generally, they found this hard to pin down, but most got one mark at least.

(b) There were no concerns with this question but explanation needed to be given for both marks.
(c) Candidates struggled to use enough terminology on this question. Stronger answers used the term sanctions and gave examples of these.

Q8. (a) Changes in family structures were explained with a good deal of success and this was a popular question. Occasionally some candidates became embroiled in giving the reasons why when the question was looking for description.

(b) Answers tended to focus on three main reasons for the changes in the experience of childhood. These were the toxic childhood, child centred families and the increase in different types of family due to changes in divorce rates etc. There were other common sense and factual narratives about technology, social media, child protection and discipline. Some referred to changes in the law about children working. Answers on this topic area are improving.

(c) This was answered well with the focus on the debate between the New Right, Functionalism and Feminism. Stronger answers gave detailed accounts.

Q9. (a) Education was the second most popular choice. The answers on the hidden curriculum were not in great depth. Stronger answers referred to Marxist theory or gender.

(b) The anti-school sub-culture question had some strong answers featuring studies, such as Willis and Hargreaves. Weaker answers were full of common sense style answers.

(c) This answer saw a wide range of materials used to tackle the debate. Stronger answers referred to labelling, racism, social class and gender.

Q10. A few candidates answered mass media questions. Some of these answered using common sense knowledge. Some centres answered using more specialist sociological knowledge.

Q11. Only a small number of candidates answered this. There were very few examples of candidates using specialist knowledge to do this. Some applied knowledge about gender from other areas of sociology with limited success.
The standard on these papers has continued to improve during the life of this specification. The entry attracts a wide range of ability including candidates whose work would not be out of place on an A’ Level paper, but the less able candidates are still able to access the paper in a meaningful way and only a very small minority are unable to attempt parts of the paper. The essays provide opportunity for high quality extended writing and the use of sociological concepts, theories and studies.

SECTION A

Q1. Most candidates were able to gain all 6 marks for this. A minority of candidates confused ethics and inclusion

Q2. (a) Two concerns identified by almost all candidates.
   (b) No concerns.
   (c) Weaker answers relied on common sense. Stronger answers referred to sociological technical terms related to health, such as nutrition, exercise or diet.
   (d) Most candidates were well informed about this and able to discuss wages, pensions and benefits as examples of income.

Q3. (a) No concerns -64%.
   (b) Most named the pattern of voting but for two marks they needed to quote detail.
   (c) Most candidates were able to make comments about the expectation that young people would not know anything about it or not be interested in the vote. Stronger answers used terminology such as stereotypes to develop this further.
   (d) Most candidates were able to write about the effect of not voting on young people and how this may have made them feel left out. Stronger answers referred to other ways that teenagers are not included in society. He strongest answers referred to marginalisation and being made folk devils.
   (e) (i) No concerns except for a failure to distinguish which type of interview.
   (ii) There were few concerns with this answer and candidates were able to offer useful commentary on the problems. Stronger answers used terminology accurately and referred to the specifics of the question.
Q4.  
(a) 663 million was the answer and a few made the error of shortening to 663 making their answer incorrect.
(b) No concerns but some candidates only included one way losing a mark.
(c) This answer prompted a wide range of responses including crime, health, inequality etc. Stronger answers featured relevant terminology.
(d) Answers such as the culture of poverty, cycle of deprivation, unemployment, prejudice and lack of education featured strongly, but candidates were able to add commentary.

Q5.  
(a) Occasionally students carelessly listed gender and ethnicity which are not groups. Otherwise, no concerns.
(b) Most students tackled this well referring to background, nationality, religion and language. Some lost out by only referring to the biological characteristics of race which was not accepted.
(c) Most identified two reasons. Stronger answers followed this through and explained fully. Weaker answers repeated reasons.
(d) (i) Again, some did not stipulate which type of interview losing a mark. Some said questionnaire.
(ii) Stronger answers featured appropriate terminology. Some failed to gather full marks as they had made an error on identifying the method. Credit was given where possible to give these candidates the benefit of the doubt.

Q6.  
(a) No concerns. Candidates used the item successfully.
(b) Students were able to identify sexism or the glass ceiling.
(c) There are still a large number of candidates who write answers to questions on disability which are clumsy at times and show a lack of awareness at the discrimination that can occur in relation to disability. Students are sometimes unknowingly revealing their own lack of awareness of what disability is. Stronger answers and there were many as well, referred to social and medical models, stereotypes and prejudice.
(d) Candidates were able to relate problems to this. Again, stronger answers used terminology with skill and referred to the specifics of the question. For example, the respondents may lie as they feel embarrassed about not getting the jobs causing a lack of validity.

SECTION B

Q7.  
(a) There were still a good deal of answers to the Work option and it was the second most popular choice. Answers to part (a) tended to be very general referring to discrimination and racism. There did not seem to be a great deal of knowledge included in the answers.
(b) Non-work time was understood by most candidates. A lot of answers focussed on the family and related the double burden or ideas related to this concept. Some made more general comments about masculinity and femininity.
(c) There was a good range of knowledge about key law changes which enabled candidates to answer this effectively. Stronger answers had detailed knowledge and related this to improvements and social changes.

Q8. A small number of candidates tackled this question. Those who did tended to be competent and knowledgeable about politics in general and were able to tackle this effectively.

Q9. (a) Strong answers to this featured an account of Marxist and Functionalist views of the police. There were lots of these which were strong. Weaker answers focussed on common sense ideas about the role of the police.

(b) Candidates find the difference between white collar and corporate crime difficult to sustain. This caused problems as they failed to relate accurate case studies and arguments about why corporate criminals are rarely convicted. Some candidates knew the arguments for non-conviction but failed to add any examples of corporate crime. Nevertheless, there were some strong answers.

(c) Candidates wrote a lot but had a tendency to repeat. Moral panics and deviancy amplification were the most effective sections of many of the essays and students showed good knowledge of this. Some referred to Sarah Thornton as well as Stanley Cohen. The notion of copycat crimes was also used. All students were able to make useful comments.

Q10. This question was rarely attempted and when done so answers were very weak suggesting that candidates had gone against teacher’s advice.